

Message Text

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44

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SUBJECT: UNIVERSITY RECTOR ELECTED

REF: MANAGUA A-02, JAN 4, 1074

1. DR. MARIANO FIALLOS OYANGUREN, DEAN OF THE FACULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES, WAS ELECTED RECTOR OF THE NATIONAL AUTONOMOUS UNIVERSITY (UNAN) THE EVENING OF DECEMBER 9. DR. FIALLOS RECEIVED 33 VOTES AND HIS ONLY OPPONENT, UNAN SECRETARY GENERAL DR. ALEJANDRO SERRANO CALDERA RECEIVED 21. ELIGIBLE TO VOTE IN THE ELECTION WERE 48 FACULTY MEMBERS AND EIGHT STUDENTS, ONE REPRESENTING EACH OF THE EIGHT FACULTIES.

2. FIALLOS FOLLOWS IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF HIS FATHER WHO WAS UNAN'S FIRST ELECTED RECTOR AFTER THE UNIVERSITY RECEIVED AUTONOMY IN 1958. THE ELDER FIALLOS DIED IN OFFICE IN 1964 AND SINCE THAT TIME UNAN HAS BEEN PRESIDED OVER BY DR. CARLOS TUNNERMANN BERNHEIM WHO WAS TWICE RE-ELECTED. FIALLOS WILL BEGIN HIS FOUR YEAR TERM MARCH 27. HE IS EXPECTED TO FOLLOW A MORE
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CONCILIATORY POLICY TOWARD THE GON IN THE INTERESTS OF INCREASING

FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM THE STATE FOR A UNIVERSITY WHICH DESPERATELY NEEDS IT. TUNNERMANN'S POOR RELATIONS AND OCCASIONAL CLASHES WITH GENERAL SOMOZA OVER THE NINE YEARS OF HIS RECTORSHIP HAVE RESULTED IN SOMOZA GIVING UNAN A MINIMUM BUDGET AND WITHHOLDING APPROVAL FOR MOST INTERNATIONAL LOANS.

3. AN INTERESTING ASPECT OF THE ELECTION WAS THE FACT THAT STUDENT VOTES FROM SIX OF THE EIGHT FACULTIES WERE CAST FOR SERRANO DESPITE THE FRENTE ESTUDIANTIL REVOLUCIONARIO'S (FER) CALL FOR STUDENT ABSTENTION. THE REVOLUTIONARY MARXIST FER HAS DOMINATED STUDENT POLITICS IN RECENT YEARS, AND MOST UNIVERSITY OBSERVERS WERE SURPRISED THAT ITS PURPORTED STRONG CONTROL OF THE STUDENTS COULD BE SO BLATANTLY DEFIED. IN THE FER'S ANALYSIS FIALLOS WAS REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PRO-SOMOZA "BOURGEOISIE" BECAUSE OF HIS EXPRESSED DESIRE FOR BETTER RELATIONS WITH THE GOVERNMENT AND SERRANO OF THE OPPOSITION "BOURGEOISIE" BECAUSE OF HIS IDENTIFICATION WITH THE SACASA-CHAMORRO GROUP. FACING SUCH AN "IMPOSSIBLE CHOICE" THE FER CALLED FOR STUDENTS TO ABSTAIN. SOME OBSERVERS BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT THE FER FAVORED SERRANO BUT FELT HE DID NOT HAVE A CHANCE TO WIN AND DID NOT WANT TO RISK ITS PRESTIGE BY BACKING A LOSER. A MORE OMINOUS INTERPRETATION, HOWEVER, IS THAT THE FER WANTED THE MORE MODERATE FIALLOS ELECTED BECAUSE HE WOULD PROVOKE CONFRONTATIONS WITH STUDENTS WHICH WILL HELP CREATE AN ATMOSPHERE CONDUCTIVE TO REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVITY.
SHELTON

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